

Members

Rep. Greg Porter, Chairperson
Rep. Paul Robertson
Rep. David Orentlicher
Rep. Robert Behning
Rep. Phyllis Pond
Rep. Jeffrey Thompson
Sen. Ron Alting, Vice-Chairperson
Sen. Gary Dillon
Sen. Jeff Drozda
Sen. Billie Breaux
Sen. Connie Sipes
Sen. Timothy Skinner



INTERIM STUDY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION ISSUES

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MEETING MINUTES¹

Meeting Date: August 10, 2004
Meeting Time: 10:30 A.M.
Meeting Place: State House, 200 W. Washington
St., Room 404
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana
Meeting Number: 1

Members Present: Rep. Greg Porter, Chairperson; Rep. David Orentlicher; Rep. Robert Behning; Rep. Phyllis Pond; Rep. Jeffrey Thompson; Sen. Ron Alting, Vice-Chairperson; Sen. Gary Dillon; Sen. Jeff Drozda; Sen. Billie Breaux.

Members Absent: Sen. Connie Sipes; Sen. Timothy Skinner; Rep. Paul Robertson.

Call To Order

Chairman Greg Porter called the meeting to order at 10:40 a.m. after declaring a quorum present to conduct business. Chairman Porter gave opening remarks and all members of the Committee introduced themselves. Chairman Porter then read the study topics assigned to the Committee by the Legislative Council: (1) School based mentoring programs and a (2) Review of state educational mandates. He then turned the meeting over to Rep. Pelath for discussion of topic (1).

¹ Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be inspected and copied in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly homepage. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.ai.org/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

Discussion of School based Mentoring Programs (HR 28)

Rep. Pelath gave a brief discussion of school based mentoring programs in the Michigan City area. He advised the Committee that mentors are adult volunteers in the community and he spoke of his specific involvement with the "Hours for Ours" program where troubled kids, who have a lack of adult role models in their lives are identified by either teachers, counselors, principals, or parents and are matched with mentors. He described some advantages of the program as offering:

- 1) Positive Adult Role Models
- 2) Gap bridging between adults and young people
- 3) Creative solutions for bringing the community into schools

He then introduced Fred LaBorn and Sarah Fine, Hours for Ours, to speak more about school-based mentoring programs and specifically the Hours for Ours Program. Ms. Fine described the mentoring process as relationship building that involves time, commitment, patience and the belief in another human being. She described some benefits of the mentoring process for students as: (1) increasing student academic achievement, (2) increasing student pro-social behaviors, (3) increasing student school attendance, (4) decreasing participation in drug/alcohol use, and (5) connecting students to other generations and the wider community. She also described the benefits to the community as: (1) increasing community ownership of the educational process, (2) establishing and perpetuating community pride and value, (3) increasing communities appreciation of the successes and challenges in educating today's youth, and (4) increasing collaborative relationships across a diverse resource base, allowing educators, business, agencies, and residents to share their experiences and assets with upcoming generations.

Hours for Ours Program

Ms. Fine presented a PowerPoint presentation and distributed a supplementary handout to the committee (Exhibit A). She described how the Hours for Ours program works to supply benefits to students and the community by offering the following:

- Ten school program sites in grades K - 8
- 160+ students served
- 150 mentors participating
- One hour per week mentor/mentees meet either during lunch or in the Safe Harbor Afterschool Program; Introduction of e-mentoring Fall 2004
- Program operates during school calendar
- Service-learning projects integrated in program
- Visits to post-secondary educational institutions for grades 5-8
- Student waiting list
- A strong relationship with the Michigan City Area Chamber of Commerce, the Discovery Alliance, the LaPorte County Unity Foundation, the Michigan City Enrichment Corporation, area post-secondary educational institutions, and the Michigan City Area Schools
- Collaborative relationship with Communities in Schools & Big Brother/Big Sisters Programs

Ms. Fine reported that 93% of mentors who have participated in the Hours for Ours program have reported a moderate to great satisfaction in their role as a mentor. There has been an 80% retention rate from one school year to the next. There were 3,107 mentor volunteer hours recorded in 2003 - 2004 school year. There was a growth from 50 mentors in January, 2000 to 150+ mentors in less than 3 years. The committee members

received copies of the following publications produced by Hours for Ours participants: Mentoring Matters Newspaper (Exhibit B), Mentoring Matters Newsletter, March 2004 (Exhibit C), Mentoring Matters Newsletter, May, 2004 (Exhibit D).

Discussion of National Trends in Mentoring Programs

Ms. Fine gave an overview of national trends in mentoring and what other states (specifically Michigan, California, and Kansas) are doing in the area of school based mentoring. She also advised the committee that the first National School-based Mentoring Conference was held in October, 2003 in Kansas City, Missouri, and there was only one attendee from Indiana. She urged the Committee and the audience to become more involved in mentoring programs. She described the National Mentoring Partnership website, www.mentoring.org, that allows individuals to obtain information on program design, management, operations, evaluations. (See also Exhibit E)

According to information distributed by Ms. Fine from the AOL 2002 National Mentor Poll Results, 2.5 million youth are in formal mentor relationships and 15 million more youth could benefit from mentoring if resources were available. The majority of people became mentors because they were asked. 99% of mentors were satisfied with their experiences and would recommend mentoring to others. The average cost of a school-based mentor program \$500 to \$600 per match, depending on the intensity and frequency of services rendered. Potential mentors tend to be between the ages of 18 - 44 years old, have some college education and have a child in their household. 28% of mentors are involved in school-based programs, 24% through religious programs, 26% through their workplace, 15% through youth programs, and 9% through sport programs.

Ms. Fine reported that in 2002 the first federal funds targeting mentoring became available through the U.S. Department of Education. The amount dispersed was 17.6 million dollars. Novice programs were awarded an automatic additional 10 points in scoring of their grant application. The average dispersed amount of funds was \$150,000 per program. Indiana received \$47,145 (one third of the average amount of dispersed funds and only 3% of federal funds). She stated that there is no coordinated channel or strategic plan for educating local education agencies, the Indiana Department of Education, state and federal political advocates about the positive research regarding the benefits of mentoring on youth achievement in the state of Indiana. She advocated the following:

- **Local level:** Establish a local mentor consortium to coordinate services to aid in promoting mentor recruitment/matching and collaborative grant writing.
- **State level:** Establish a statewide support in identifying and allocating resources in support of mentoring. Develop and strengthen political ties in support of mentoring. Consider funding of collaborative pilot programs that serve wider areas of children through mentoring.
- **Federal level:** Establish ties from local and state levels to the federal level in support of identifying and allocating resources for mentoring initiatives in Indiana. Develop and strengthen political ties in Washington, DC, that will benefit Indiana children served through mentoring.

Committee Discussion

Senator Alting asked what costs are associated with these programs. Ms. Fine responded that costs are associated with the recruiting of mentors, marketing of the program and the actual programs themselves (i.e. publications produced by students).

Rep. Pond asked if the program administrators received a salary. Ms. Fine responded that salaries come out of any grant funds that are received. She also stated that there were some applications from Indiana programs that were declined federal funds. She stated that the deadline for this year's grant application was July 7, 2004 and the total amount of the grant to be distributed would be 50 million dollars.

Senator Drozda inquired as to whether she knew why some programs were denied. Ms. Fine stated that there is a scoring system that is used to determine who receives funds and the denied programs did not receive enough points. Mr. LaBorn, Hours for Ours, stated that more programs in Indiana might have received federal funding if there were a statewide combined effort to help everyone who wants to participate in mentoring get needed information and grant writing help.

Senator Breaux asked for clarification of the difference between tutoring and mentoring. Ms. Fine responded that tutoring is academic whereas mentoring is relationship building.

Rep. Pond asked if there was an overlapping of the school based program and the Big Brother/Big Sister programs. Ms. Fine responded that the school based programs focus specifically on participation during the school year on school property, during the school day, and immediately before or after school .

Senator Drozda inquired as to whether mentors are given background checks. Ms. Fine responded in the affirmative. He also asked if legislation was required to achieve the goals of school-based mentoring programs. Ms. Fine responded that there is a DOE initiative for the programs and that legislation may help organize the state programs and collaborate efforts.

Chairman Porter asked if the programs serve special needs children. Ms. Fine answered in the affirmative. Chairman Porter then asked Terry Spradlin, DOE, to address the issues of funding and DOE's stand on school-based mentoring programs. Mr. Spradlin responded that the federal grant that was referenced by Ms. Fine is only available to local private entities and the Division of Student Services has information on the mentoring programs offered in Indiana. The Committee decided that it wants to hear more from DOE on the issue of school-based mentoring programs, so Chairman Porter asked Mr. Spradlin to speak more on the issue at the next Committee meeting to be held on September 21, 2004 at 10:00 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:44 a.m.